

F 68271.
Inaction

20 May 1968

RECORDED FOR FBI WIRE

SUBJECT: Robert Charles Charles

WALS 116273

FBI - NEW YORK 9110273

1. On 29 April 1968 Mr. John McEach, Executive Secretary to Senator George McGovern, D-S.D., telephoned to the offices of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in New York City and asked that they contact Senator Charles (Charlie) Gandy, who had just arrived in New York. A member of AFSC, David Clegg, was sent to see Mr. Gandy at his hotel, Hotel Americana, New York City, New York, USA. Mr. Clegg, Executive Director of AFSC, recommended Charles as a man of great experience to the AFSC because of his work in South Africa, and described as President of the New Commercial Port of Durban, South Africa, the Afrikaner and入党派's power. Mr. McEach instructed that the AFSC telephone Mr. Gandy in Durban to contact Major General Col. R. S. Naidoo, South African Minister of Defense, in order to obtain more background information and an appointment on Charles.

2. On 1 May (1) May, McEach advised that Charles was staying at the Park Charter Hotel, New York, and that he had telephoned his wife since her visa had been applied to him by Dreyer. Charles confirmed her to be his person of contact in Washington. According to Mr. McEach, Charles had representatives to see Vice Chairman Johnson, Senator Pauline, and Congressman Rogers (Vermont). However, Charles was willing to talk to any representative of the AFL-CIO's office. Mrs. McEach stated that the Nigerian Agent from the AFL-CIO was ready to go to New York to talk to Charles and invited AFL to accompany him. Clegg speaks very little English and a interpreter in French was therefore required for the interview. Mrs. McEach stated that she might be able to obtain a French interpreter from the Army, Congress's Hospital, but it would not be an intelligence officer. It was decided that James Deyer, New York Office, who has a knowledge of the French language would accompany the AFL representative. It was also arranged that the AFL representative [redacted] the side arranged that Deyer would meet the AFL representative (Captain Rogers) at the Park Charter Hotel where Charles was staying.

3. On 2 May (2) May, McEach reported that Col. Naidoo had telephoned Mr. Deyer in New York City. Deyer had complimented Charles on his work of his book on Africa. Charles, according to Deyer, formerly held no political position but in view of the current political situation in South Africa, Charles now thinks that he may have day to get involved. Deyer described Charles as well-educated, politically and financially, on both sides of the fence in Africa. He is also a good friend of Neville Bonner. Deyer had given Charles letters of introduction to Senator McClellan and other candidates in Washington. Charles wanted to see President Kennedy and indeed had gone to the White House to interview him - an appointment. He was well received by the President's assistant secretary and invited to dinner that evening with the administration.

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CONTINUE: General Section CHIEF

Secretary. During a conversation between Charles and Mrs. Nixon, Charles advised the couple that he was being monitored.

4. Charles advised Mr. Feltman to return with a firm geological survey party to the area and to do whatever was necessary to close up the Charles G. Johnson mine and to stop all mining operations.

5. On 3 May G-1 CIA Director telephoned to advise that he had had a three-hour conference the previous day with Charles and Mrs. Nixon at the White House with representatives and others by Charles to discuss what the United States could do in current Cuban negotiations. Feltman advised that he was transmitting the information to Headquarters official that he was transmitting the information to Headquarters via cable, copies of the telegram were transmitted to AID, Vice Admiral, US Division, and US Latin American Bureau (Mrs. Neffack), US Division, and US Latin American Bureau.

6. On 6 May G-1 CIA Director, Forrest French, advised that US Division wished to speak to Charles and Feltman and was asked to come to Headquarters. Mrs. Neffack telephoned at approximately 1800 to Mr. Neffack to advise that she had just received a telephone call from Mrs. de Neufchâtel asking permission to obtain hotel accommodations in Washington. Upon being told that we had no special needs of certain reservations, Mrs. Neffack stated that she would check with the State Department Protocol Office to determine which hotels would admit non-US guests. Mrs. Neffack finally made arrangements at the Hotel Americana for Charles to meet the US representative in the lobby of the Willard Hotel, Washington, D. C., at 1000 hours on 7 May. Attempts to reach Mrs. Neffack that afternoon were unsuccessful. At 0000, 7 May, a call was made to Mrs. Neffack to confirm that Charles would be in Washington on that day and that arrangements had been made for a meeting with an Agency representative for 1000 hours. Mrs. Neffack reported that both Mrs. de Neufchâtel and Charles had called her the previous evening to confirm a 1000 American appointment with her. Mrs. Neffack has confirmed that CIA and Army would not be working at cross purposes. She had informed an Agent from the FBI to meet Charles at 1000 and she said it would not be possible for her to withdraw from her commitment since Army command now forbids to withdraw from her commitment unless Army command so says. The point of contact with Charles, Mrs. Neffack informed US Division the committee had agreed on the suggestion that the US Division representative might meet Charles and Mrs. Neffack at noon and that Mrs. Neffack advised to withdraw shortly thereafter. The US representative declined the offer and suggested that a meeting later in the afternoon be arranged. Mrs. Neffack believed that due to some scheduling difficulties, she had been placed in the middle in the situation from which she could not gradually withdraw and requested that someone accompany her.

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CIRCUIT CLERK'S OFFICE
CHARLES J. CHARLES

7. I met Mr. Charles in the lobby of the Hotel Statler shortly before noon, and a few minutes later, Mr. Charles arrived, accompanied by Mr. Carl H. Kellack, his business agent. We went to the office maintained by Mr. Kellack. Mr. Kellack informed me that Mr. Charles had been born in Italy, Sicily, and that he had been educated in Sicily and then came to America and a while ago had obtained a position with the Italian Army. He returned to Sicily the following year and was in Sicily until 1937. He also mentioned that he had been a member of the FBI from 1937 to 1940, during which time he had been assigned to New York City. He also mentioned that he had been a member of the FBI from 1940 to 1942, during which time he had been assigned to the FBI office in Philadelphia at the time of the Boston Police Commission. He has no family, parents or relatives still living in Sicily. His father was Mr. Giuseppe Charles and his mother was Mrs. Maria Giuseppe Charles. He has a brother, Mr. Giuseppe Charles, who resides in Sicily. His father was a fisherman and his mother a housewife, and the family of four form a modest household. Mr. Giuseppe Charles mentioned that he had been Charles' financial agent and that he is a partner with him in a small business in Sicily.

8. Both Charles and Mr. Kellack left my office to arrange meetings with Government officials in Washington. It was mentioned to Charles that a meeting had been arranged for him at FBI and that Mr. Coffey would meet him in the lobby. At 1:00 P.M. Coffey, Mr. and Mrs. Giuseppe Charles and I departed and Charles remained in the lobby waiting for contact.

9. In the course of the luncheon conversation, Charles had mentioned to Mrs. Coffey that he desired to see Mr. Vice, A.D.A., to discuss his aid to Kellack. After the afternoon session, Coffey called to state that the A.D.A. called the State Department to go along Charles' request. Mr. Leonard (State) has called her back to pass on the FBI's best man's opinion that anyone in the United States Government should be an official contact with Charles. Mrs. Coffey has considered Charles to be close to the Foreign Comintern, to have been involved in several shady financial dealings, and in general, to be an undesirable character. Mrs. Coffey asked whether the Agency had any interest in Charles which would dictate further contact with Coffey.

10. Mrs. Coffey advised with Mr. Kellack and determined that as a result of the meeting with Charles, the FBI Section Back had no further plans to contact him. I told Mrs. Coffey that our interests seemed to have been enlisted and that I believed we should disengage ourselves as carefully as possible.

(S) [initials]

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11. George H. Lee, P-2 Coordinator, called on 7 May to inquire concerning our developments in the Charles case. He stated that he had called his colleague that day to advise him that Agent Lee had advised in Charles case that it was necessary as an intermediary of the subject of Charles, Johnson also had passed the lead to General Ulrich. This was confirmed later due to the man to be responsible to the Chairman, whom he had been unable to name this day. It had been learned by Lee that Lee had contacted CIA contacts with Charles. It appeared to him that the information had been passed and he had no reason to doubt that Lee was completely satisfied in the way the matter had been handled.

12. On 9 May Mr. McLean telephoned to advise that the Congressional Friends of AEC was discussing the Charles case with P-2 to determine future course of action, since the still remains concerned over our position in the case when Charles considered his to be the final point in Washington. I explained to him that the matter was one for others, the State Department or the operational elements to handle and that we preferred to discuss ourselves. Mr. McLean mentioned that a General had been referred to the effect that in view of Charles was previously mentioned as a contact, to General should the letter be forwarded. On one of the opinion that the J. Government should continue to "play ball" with Charles as a former agent in British service.

A. D. CHARLES

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